our fourfooted friends

Animal Rescue League of Boston • Spring 1994

Animal Rescue League of Boston

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Our Fourfooted Friends

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COVER:

Spring Fever — When the "call of the wild" sounds, make sure your pets don't answer! A pet outdoors is a pet at risk (see rabies article on p. 13).

Photo by Linda L. Ferrigno of Monument Beach.

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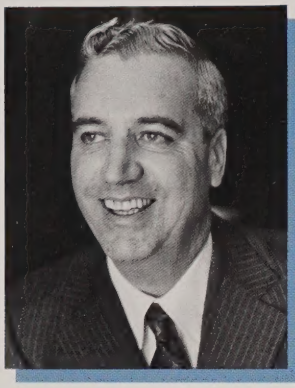


Arthur G. Slade, *President*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A Humane Victory

As you may recall, the League, along with several other organizations, sought and obtained a temporary restraining order in 1989 to prohibit the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife from putting into effect regulations which would have allowed the use of the padded jaw leg-hold trap.

Specifically, on October 31, 1989, Judge Botsford of the Suffolk Superior Court "allowed an injunction and enjoined the enforcement of those regulations which permit the use, setting, or maintenance of padded jaw traps on land."

This matter continued on unchanged but not permanently resolved until May 7, 1992 when Judge McDaniel of the same Court denied a motion for summary judgment in favor of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife based on their argument that the plaintiffs (humane groups) lacked standing to maintain this action. This decision clearly established the right for the League and other humane organizations to bring such action in the first place.

Following this came a request to the Superior Court from both sides of this issue for cross-motions for a summary judgment in their respective favors.

Our case had challenged the proposed new regulation, alleging that padded jaw traps are prohibited by language in Massachusetts General Law, C131, S80A, which prohibits the use of (1) traps which do not capture the animal unhurt and (2) traps which knowingly cause continued suffering to the animal. We further argued that, because padded jaw traps are illegal under Massachusetts General Law, the Regulation must be declared invalid.

In late December of 1993, the long-awaited Decision and Order for Judgment came from the Suffolk Superior Court as written by Justice Patrick J. King. I am delighted to say that Judge King found in our favor. In part, the written opinion states, "The plain language of General Law C131, S80A shows a legislative intent to prevent injury and suffering to animals." The defendants urged the court to hold that the statute does not prohibit the use of padded jaw traps because the designers of these traps "intended" to construct a trap which would take the animal unhurt. Judge King noted in his opinion, "There is nothing in the statutory language of GL C131, S80A which suggest such a narrow legislative intent." In a further statement in the opinion it states, "the plaintiffs have presented uncontradicted evidence, including scientific studies, that the padded jaw traps authorized by the Regulation hurt animals."

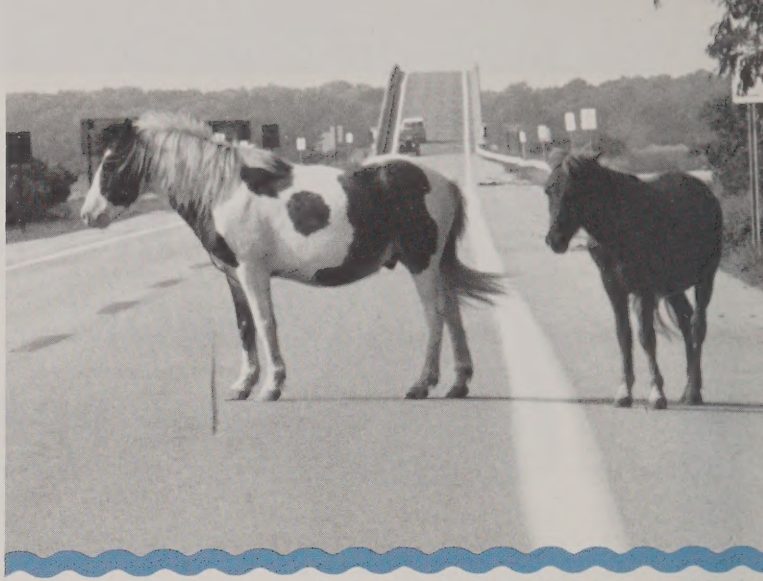
Thus, the Court ordered that the Regulation is invalid to the extent the regulation permits padded jaw traps to be used, set, placed or maintained on land because it contravenes Massachusetts General Law C131, S80A.

This is clearly a major victory in the long battle against the use of one of the most cruel devices ever devised by human beings. This has caught both state-wide and national recognition. I would especially like to thank and praise all the many hard-working friends and supporters of the League who worked so long for this success. This court opinion represents a major accomplishment in the elimination of such devices.

I have just learned that the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife has filed an appeal to this decision. This seems unfortunate since three judges have already come to the same basic conclusion on this issue on three different occasions. While this action will obviously delay the issue for yet a fourth time, I am confident the final conclusion will be the same. In the meantime, the use of these traps is still prohibited.

A NON-LETHAL SOLUTION

by Terrie Bierig-Neyland



Wild horses pass right by the "grassless bridge," the only exit from Assateague Island.

The public no longer supports the lethal and sometimes indiscriminate methods employed in traditional wildlife management such as trapping, shooting, and poisoning, however, the suffering caused by animal overpopulation on protected lands such as national and state parks is very real. Is a humane solution to the worldwide overpopulation of many wild animal species possible?

Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland is home to several bands of feral horses descended from the original herd that has inhabited the island since the 17th century. Thousands of visitors each year travel to the island to view the wild horses in their free roaming and natural environment. The National Park Service maintains the Maryland side of the island and is responsible for protecting the horses. There are very strict rules against feeding, approaching, chasing, petting or otherwise harassing the horses. The Park Rangers do not supply food, water, veterinary care or shelter to the horses. When a horse is dying from an injury or illness the rangers will humanely euthanize the animal to prevent prolonged suffering. A visit to the island feels as a step back to a time when animals outnumbered people and it was the humans who were the visitors on the land.

The horses are not tame, overweight caricatures of their ancestors. They eke out a living in conditions so challenging that not one of 40 wild mustangs transferred to the Virginia herd in 1970 survived. Most of their diet comprises "coarse saltmarsh cordgrass and American beachgrass, supplemented by thorny green bier stems, bayberry twigs, rose hips, seaweeds, and even delectable poison ivy!" (National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior) This high salt diet causes them to drink great amounts of water—that is how they come by their "fat" appearance. The horses are truly "feral" or wild and they will bite or kick if approached or harassed by people.

There are two factions of this herd separated by fencing on Assateague Island along the border between the Maryland and the Virginia sides. The ideal size of both herds is approximately 150 horses as this is the number of horses the island ecosystem can support. The Virginia herd is maintained by the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Department. The Virginia population is controlled by means of a yearly round up where the horses are herded together, made to swim across the channel to the fairgrounds where the foals and yearlings are auctioned. The remainder of the herd is led back across the channel until the following year when the process is repeated.

The Maryland herd has benefited from a decade of population control research that may soon become the basis for a full-fledged management program. Jay Kirkpatrick of the Deaconess Research Institute in Montana first approached the National Park Service with a plan to help control the horse population on the island. In order to be accepted, the plan could not involve any handling, capture or harassment of the wild horses and it had to be humane. The park regulations that protect the horses apply to scientists, too. Kirkpatrick's plan involved the use of a protein-based immunocontraceptive (PZP) that was to be individually administered by dart into a target group of mares. This test group was then monitored for evidence of pregnancy, inhibition of fertility or any associated side effects.

Immunocontraception is a developing area of study in wildlife management circles and it is an option that can offer a humane, non-capture, low-risk solution to overpopulation dilemmas. "We are on the cutting edge of this technology with the Assateague study," according to Carl Zimmerman, Resource Management Department of the National Park Service. "We are on the verge of creating a horse management plan using PZP, possibly as early as the Spring of 1994." Jay Kirkpatrick describes immunocontraception as a "method that stimulates the immune system of the target animal to produce antibodies that interfere with some fundamental event in the reproductive process, i.e., ovulation, sperm production, fertilization or implantation." An earlier study in Idaho involving feral horses had concentrated on capture programs with stallions where large doses of testosterone-based infertility drugs were tested (Kirkpatrick, 1982). A second study involving the use of a steroid (mTP) in stallions was abandoned because the dosage required was too large and difficult to administer without a capture program (Kirkpatrick and Turner, 1982). Although these programs did yield results of infertility they required stressing of the animals during capture and were ultimately determined to be too costly to serve as realistic management programs.

The Maryland study has yielded much of the results that Jay Kirkpatrick and the National Park Service hoped for and the PZP immunocontraceptive fits the ideal described by wildlife agents: "(1) a high degree of effectiveness, (2) a lack of toxicity and harmful side effects, (3)

reversibility and a flexible duration of action, to preserve the reproductive and genetic integrity of the target animals, (4) low cost, (5) minimal or no effect on social organization or behavior, (6) remote delivery, preferably with a single administration, and (7) inability of the contraceptive agent to be passed from the treated animal to predators or scavengers, or humans through the food chain" (Kirkpatrick and Turner, 1991). This PZP immunocontraception study on feral horses was six years old in 1993 and the results were in; "The work on Assateague Island has resulted in only a single foal in 60 mare-years, among treated animals, instead of the predicted 30 foals," reports Jay Kirkpatrick. It works!

Acceptance of this research by the National Park Service as a feral horse management program will mark the first time a wild animal population is controlled by non-lethal methods apart from a research setting. The horses will never be shot or poisoned or trapped or captured or rounded up and sold. Assateague Island National Seashore will serve as a model to other national parks and zoos that are testing immunocontraception within their boundaries.

The possible applications for the humane control of populations as diverse as white-tailed deer to endangered species is endless but also riddled with ethical dilemmas. Jay Kirkpatrick has pondered many of the possible abuses of this technology and poses the following for consideration: "With each advance in wildlife contraception comes the greater threats of abuse of this technology. Should feral horses be contracepted just to provide more grass for cattle and sheep? Should predator populations be reduced in order to produce more game animals for hunters? Should contraception ever be used in an endangered species, such as the elephant? If so, under what conditions? Who should make the decisions about the use of contraceptive technology on wildlife? What criteria should be used? What are the allowable limits of stress to which animals should be subjected in order to apply wildlife contraception? Such questions must be answered before fertility control becomes a common wildlife management tool."

For now, the Maryland side of Assateague Island belongs to the wild horses who roam their territory unmolested and diligently guarded by their National Park Service caretakers. Every year however, despite the steadfast supervision of the Park Rangers, a handful of irresponsible visitors ignore the rules and hand feed the more friendly and approachable horses through their car windows. These horses become "beggars" and at least one a year is inevitably killed while rushing toward a moving car for an expected handout. When human beings make the wrong choices in regard to interactions with wild animals, it is usually the animals that suffer. With the arrival of non-lethal solutions such as immunocontraception we have the opportunity to make the "right" choices in regard to wildlife management. We *can* choose to follow the park regulations as well as the laws of nature.

A mare and a yearling roam the National Seashore Beach.

A Veterinarian's Perspective on Animal Abuse

By Edward A. Leonard, D.V.M.

Stray animals with broken limbs, burns and other man-made injuries receive free veterinary care through the shelter.

Most veterinarians take an oath on being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine. This oath is a pledge by which veterinarians promise to conduct themselves according to the principles of their profession. Veterinarians swear to use their scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health, the relief of animal suffering, and the promotion of public health. Traditionally, people consider an oath an invocation of divine punishment upon the person taking it if that person did not testify truthfully.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires licensed veterinarians to conduct their practice in conformity with the currently accepted standards in the profession of veterinary medicine. The American Veterinary Medical Association expects veterinarians will consider first the welfare of the patient for the purposes of relieving suffering and disability. This echoes their oath to practice their profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics.

The ethics of the veterinary profession also imply that a doctor of veterinary medicine and the veterinarian's staff will protect the personal privacy of clients. But what should they do when a client presents an injured animal and admits that they, or someone they know, injured the animal? And what should they do when a client refuses to care for his or her animal in a manner appropriate to its physiological and behavioral needs?

The Courts have ruled, "It is the duty of every citizen to communicate to his government any information which he has of the commission of an offense against its laws." The laws clearly describe cruelty to animals as crimes against morality, decency, and good order. In order to protect the health and welfare of the animal, the individual, and others whose health and welfare may be endangered, the law requires the veterinarian to reveal the confidence.

When a person has a short temper that results in a broken leg for a dog, the health and welfare of this animal and others are endangered. When an individual refuses to feed a

cat a balanced diet, and insists on feeding a homemade vegetarian diet inappropriate for the needs of the feline species, this animal is endangered. When a person refuses to relieve the misery of chronic parasitism by making a full personal commitment to provide for the relief of the animal's suffering, this animal is endangered. In these cases, is not the veterinarian required by ethics and law to reveal the potential and real cruelty?

Benefit to the patient should transcend personal disadvantage in strongly but reasonably expressing these concerns to the client or owner of the animal. These concerns are standards by which an individual may conscientiously conduct relationships with clients, colleagues, and the public. In these cases, ethics and the law require the veterinarian to reveal the potential and real cruelty.

This puppy's ribs tell a tale of starvation, but the signs of suffering are not always so obvious.

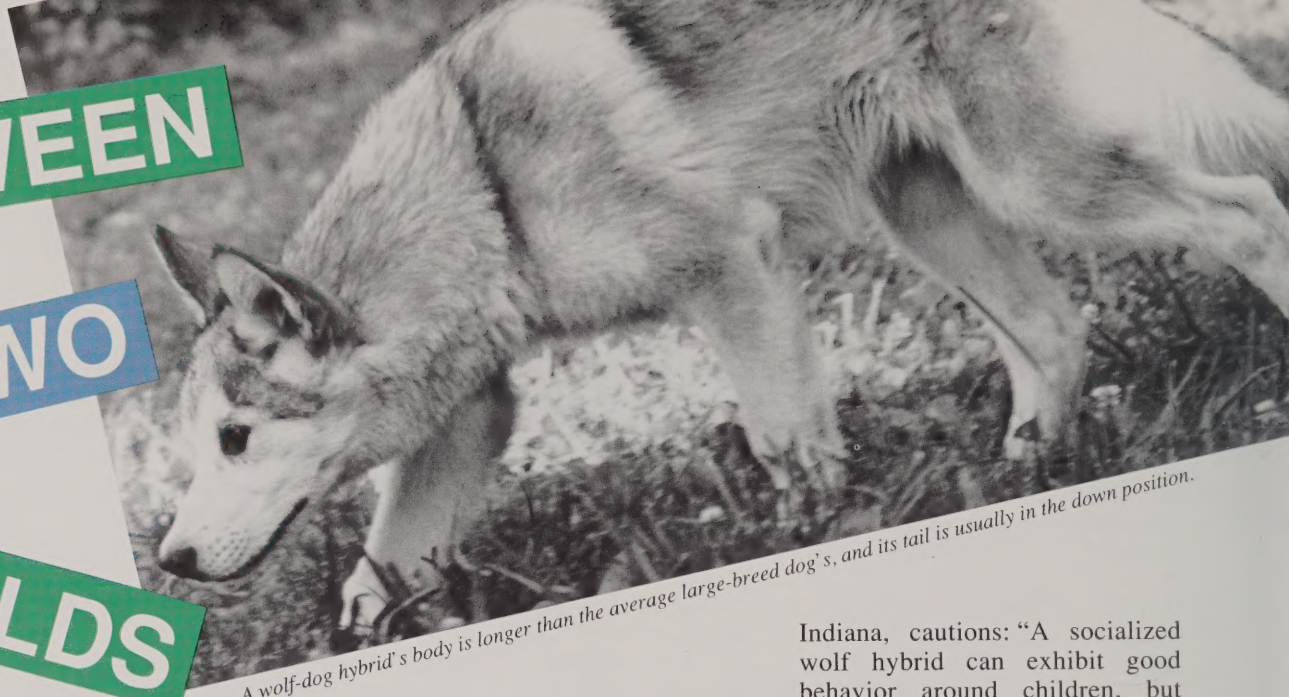
Veterinarians should also consider the effect the day-to-day environment has on the health of the animal. The behavioral signs of inapparent suffering receive less attention than other diseases, but they are discernible. In addressing the needs of animals, our goal is to seek the best situation to promote harmony with their environment. This harmony cannot exist in situations where long-term stress persists. Although pain and severe illnesses are often reduced to levels that allow an apparently normal life, residual low-level effects may linger. Even repetitive transient distress takes its toll on the well-being of the pet. The problem is that the new level of behavior becomes the norm for the animal and after some period of time that behavior is accepted as typical for that animal. Perhaps the best remedy is to always compare behavior among animals and to remember if this animal always acted this way.

What role can the public play in dealing with the problem of endangered animals? Some of the people who abuse animals keep them without seeking veterinary care. It is unusual that such individuals would be seen as clients by a veterinarian. The Court's ruling says it is the duty of every citizen to make known any facts that he recognizes as an offense against the law. What is important is information that can be shown to be objective and real. If it is possible and safe to do so, try to make a visit so you may see for yourself the numbers of animals and the conditions under which the animals exist. Ask the League for help if you are not sure what is right and what to do.

In 1993, the League investigated more than 1,400 reports of abused animals. Some complaints came from veterinarians, but many came from neighbors, bystanders, and good Samaritans. Each report with sufficient facts about the abuse and the location of the animal was investigated. To encourage concerned individuals in performing this duty without fear of consequences, the League keeps the source of the information concealed. If the League can find sufficient information on investigation of the complaint, the person who cared enough to call need never make a public statement.

The A.V.M.A. expects veterinarians' activities to enhance the honor and dignity of their profession, and render service to the community. Anyone who accepts the Golden Rule stating that "one should do to others as he would have others do to him" as a guide for general conduct should have little difficulty with ethics. Exemplary conduct not only upholds honor and dignity, but also advances community welfare for people and animals.

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS



A wolf-dog hybrid's body is longer than the average large-breed dog's, and its tail is usually in the down position.

New Law Prohibits Wolf-Dog Hybrids

Neither dog nor wolf, the wolf-dog hybrid is a creature between two worlds, at home in none. First bred in the 1970's, the hybrid wolf-dog population in the United States has been estimated at anywhere between 100,000 and 300,000.

Though described by their proponents as "intelligent, loyal and sensitive," wolf hybrids became a source of alarm and concern as widespread reports began to surface of supposedly socialized wolf hybrids attacking and even killing children. At the close of 1993, Massachusetts state legislators passed a law, which became effective in February, 1994, prohibiting the possession, sale, breeding, import, export, or release of any wild canid (dog) hybrid or wild felid (cat) hybrid.

Even as this bill was being passed in the Commonwealth, three more children in New England states were attacked by wolf hybrids. In October, a 4-year-old boy was seriously injured in Jamaica, NH. Two months later, a 3-year-old boy in Townshend, VT was killed by a hybrid which turned out to be one of the offspring of the animal involved in the New Hampshire attack. Also in December, another 3-year-old boy in Stratford, NH was maimed by neighbor's wolf-dog, requiring 14 stitches.

Under the Massachusetts legislation, anyone who owned a hybrid animal prior to January 1, 1994 is "grandfathered" under the law. They may keep their animals, but must get a permit to do so from the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife prior to July 31, 1994, and must comply with permit requirements and conditions that are being drawn up by the state.

In addition to the public safety threat, wolf-dog hybrids pose a major humane concern for animal control and animal welfare organizations. Not suitable or safe for placement as pets, hybrids are frequently given up by owners who find they can't handle them, and humane societies have no choice but to euthanize these animals. Also, wolf-dog hybrids cannot be effectively vaccinated against rabies, a fact which some states have used to prohibit ownership of these animals in cities, based on public health guidelines. This is a stop-gap measure, however, since it simply gives owners the option of moving the problem animals from the city to a rural area.

An unpredictable combination of a domestic animal and a wild animal, most hybrids "cannot be housebroken, trained to stay at home, or trained to obey voice commands," according to Marc Bekoff, Ph.D., a canid researcher at the University of Colorado, quoted in an article in The National Animal Control Association *News*. In the same article, wolf specialist Monty Sloan, of Wolf Park, Indiana, cautions: "A socialized wolf hybrid can exhibit good behavior around children, but predatory behavior can be triggered suddenly, because the predatory instinct has not been altered genetically, but only suppressed." Normal childhood behaviors, like running or crying, can cause a wolf-dog to regard a child as prey.

These hybrids are most often the result of breeding wolves with Alaskan malamutes, Siberian huskies, Norwegian elkhounds, German shepherds, and other northern domestic dog breeds. Though not all hybrids look alike, they generally share certain recognizable physical traits, including a longer body than the average large-breed dog, disproportionately large feet, with a long, bushy tail (usually in the down position unless displaying dominance), and gray or yellow eyes, although eyes can be brown or blue, depending on the dog ancestor's breed. Behavior is usually shy and suspicious, and frightened around strangers.

Wolf expert Randall Riggs of the American Wolf Hybrid Alliance concludes that "many owners are simply not able to grasp the gravity of the potentially dangerous animal that they erroneously believe to be a domestic pet. There are so many obstacles to ownership that the new owners may simply give up on the animal, after it grows out of the 'cute' stage." The result is that animal shelters wind up with the responsibility for protecting the public from animals which the American Humane Association describes as "man-made mistakes."

Over 3,000 kittens and cats were adopted in 1993.

1993 ANNUAL REPORT

The year 1993, the League's 95th year of humane service, saw a consolidation of effort on the homefront as the staff geared to meet the dual challenge of ever-increasing reports of cruelty and neglect, and a rabies outbreak among raccoons that now seriously threatens this state's domestic animal population. At the same time, the League reached out beyond its service area to provide direct, hands-on assistance to animal flood victims in the nation's water-ravaged Midwestern states.

In addition to dispatching a team of relief workers who volunteered to take part in an exhausting and often risky rescue mission, the League also provided much-needed pet food, vaccines and other emergency equipment and supplies. The League's 30,984 members, including the 1,559 new friends who joined the League in 1993, can take pride in the fact that their support was directly responsible not only for helping animals at home, but also for literally saving the lives of hundreds of threatened animals elsewhere in the nation. We are deeply grateful for your help and support of these efforts.

(Continued on next page)

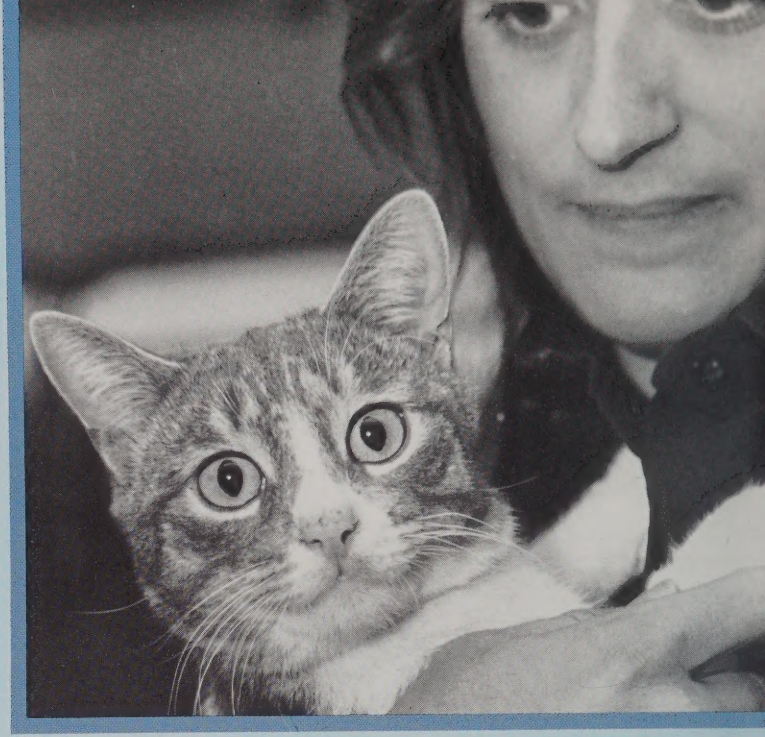
1993 ANNUAL REPORT

Through its shelter and adoption services, veterinary clinic, inspection, investigation, law enforcement and rescue programs, the League provided help to a total of 167,538 animals during 1993. Law enforcement officers investigated 1,464 reported incidents of cruelty or neglect, a 3% increase over the previous year's alarming record high. A total of 126,958 animals were seen in these investigations, and in 314 inspection visits to stables, guard dog establishments, pet shops, kennels, research laboratories and other places where animals are kept for commercial purposes.

Many of these investigations resulted in criminal prosecution, a process which involved League law enforcement officers in 60 court appearances during 1993. A veterinarian in the New Bedford area alerted humane officials to one such case after a 10-week-old Doberman mix puppy was brought to his hospital dying of massive infection caused by a tail-docking performed in cruel and unsanitary conditions. League investigators found that the owner's brother-in-law had cut the puppy's tail off on a kitchen table, with no anesthetic, and then cauterized the wound with peroxide and flour. The League brought felony charges of mutilating an animal against him, and also charged the couple who owned the puppy as accessories. All three fled the area, and a warrant is out for their arrest.

While many animals are the victims of malicious cruelty, a large proportion of animal suffering continues to be caused by ignorance and misguided good intentions. This most often happens when people try to take in more animals than they can possibly handle, under the illusion that they are doing a good deed by offering a shelter of sorts. In one such case, the League had to take custody of 13 cats and two dogs, found in a Cambridge home. Weak, sick, and severely stunted in growth, the cats were being kept three to a cage, with little room to move about. One dog was very thin, the other so sick that it had to be euthanized.

Similarly, a woman on Cape Cod who operates what she considers to be a "rest home" for horses has been the source of several complaints. After repeated warnings, League agents, accompanied by two veterinarians, arrived at her property where they found seven horses, three dogs and one sheep, all in poor condition. The horses ranged from 100 to 200 pounds underweight, two dogs were being kept in a hay loft, and the third was kept in a closet with no light or ventilation. This woman has promised to comply with humane standards of care, and is now being closely monitored with regular inspection visits.



Shelter manager Lisa Johnson holds "Spinner," one of the many formerly abused or neglected animals placed in new homes through the Salem shelter.

During 1993, the raccoon rabies strain turned up in almost every community in Massachusetts, with the exception of the Cape Cod area. Designated as animal inspectors for Boston and Brewster, the League is responsible for rabies quarantines in these areas. During the year the League supervised the quarantines of 964 animals, an increase of 69% over 1992, and an indication of how seriously the public is reacting to this threat. In addition to public health education efforts, the League's rabies prevention activities included the immunization of more than 1,878 dogs and cats in a series of rabies clinics held in various Boston neighborhoods.

More gratifying to report is the fact that a total of 4,782 animals were placed in adoptive homes during the year, including 1,442 dogs, 3,109 cats, and 231 miscellaneous animals. Another 1,142 lost pets were returned to their grateful owners.

Veterinarians in the League's outpatient clinic for small animals report a total of 13,154 patients visits in 1993, up 2% from last year. The animals cared for include not only shelter animals but also many animals brought to the clinic for emergency treatment by League ambulance and rescue agents who responded to a total of 11,461 calls for help during the year.

On the legislative front, efforts to halt the use of the inhumane padded-jaw leghold trap continued (see article on page 3), and the League was instrumental in securing passage of new legislation to protect carriage horses, as well as a bill that sets guidelines for ownership of ferrets.

The League's Cape Cod Branch in Brewster conducted 25 pet therapy programs in retirement and nursing homes in various Cape communities, and launched a "Pet of the Week" feature on radio station WCOD, as well as a "Pet of the Month" spot on cable C-3 TV. sponsored by the Cape Cod Kennel Club. This branch also played host to an unusual guest for six months, a former racehorse named

From bunnies to birds, more and more miscellaneous pets are in need of good homes.

"Fighting Proud." Neglected and underweight, the horse had been passed from owner to owner, living in six homes in the past five years. After regaining weight and strength, the horse was placed in a permanent home in Brewster, where League staff members still visit with her frequently.

The Pine Ridge Animal Center in Dedham also offered temporary hospitality to a neglected horse this year, a 17-year-old mare named "Star" who has since been adopted. In addition, for several weeks they cared for nine wild turkeys which had terrorized the residents of Holliston until League agents succeeded in apprehending them. The turkeys were eventually placed with the Plimoth Plantation. The Dedham staff also provided weekly humane education programs on site for over 200 elementary-school-age children who attended the neighboring Noble and Greenough School's summer day camp program.

The staff at the Sheldon Branch in Salem have a heartwarming story to share. Responding to an ambulance call, they found a cat locked in a cellar for an undetermined time, without any food or water. Emaciated and dehydrated, he was also paralyzed, but somehow still managed to purr. They took him to the North Shore Veterinary Hospital where, after receiving fluids and medical treatment, he began to improve. He managed to get to his feet but, disoriented and wobbly, at first he could walk only in circles, and his caretakers nicknamed him "Spinner." Though he will never be able to run and jump like a normal cat, the 1-year-old Spinner miraculously recuperated to the point where he could be placed in a loving home. The staff recently received a note from his new owner who wrote: "Spinner is no problem whatsoever . . . he loves to be loved and played with and, believe me, he gets plenty of both!"

The Animal Friends Summer School in Cataumet, which this year will offer its 45th season of animal-related classes and activities, expanded its program in 1993. For the first time, the school now offers the option of a full-day program, in response to a survey of campers' parents which indicated that many, particularly families with two parents working, preferred this option to the traditional half-day program. Additional humane education activities included shelter tours, classroom presentations and pet care demonstrations at schools and at the League, continued dissemination of pet care information, and the quarterly publication of *Our Fourfooted Friends*.

Nursed back to health at the Brewster shelter, "Proud" is back in peak condition.

Photo by Arthur Pollack, courtesy of Boston Herald.

In Memoriam

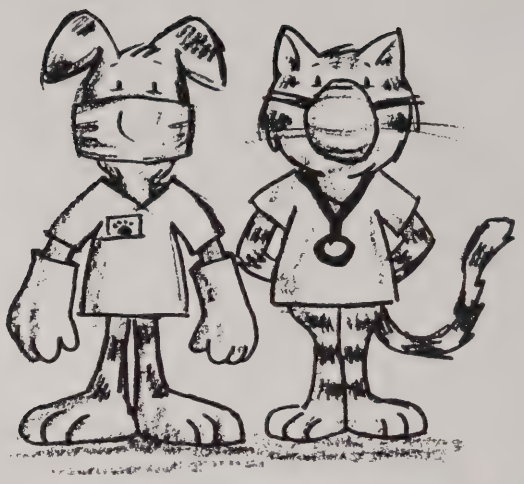
Arthur E. Penny

The officers, directors, and entire staff of the League mourn the death on January 28, 1994 of Arthur E. Penny, and extend their deepest sympathy to his sister, Doris Penny of Somerville, and his other friends and family.

A native of Somerville, Arthur Penny joined the League staff in 1960 as a bookkeeper and was elevated to the position of director of administration in 1964. Prior to beginning his 34 years of service with the League, he was a member of the staff of Boston University's Alumni Office, and attended the University's Evening College of Commerce.

A veteran of World War II, he enlisted in the United States Army after his graduation from Somerville High School and was assigned to the 166th Engineer Combat Battalion. As a member of this unit, he participated in the Normandy invasion fifty years ago this June, and saw further action in five major campaigns in the European theatre under the command of General George S. Patton.

It is as a man of peace, integrity, and abiding humanity, however, that he will best be remembered. Throughout his long association with the League, he brought his unique blend of kindness, humor, and good will to a wide variety of humane endeavors well beyond the scope of his administrative responsibilities. From judging the League's annual pet shows to making meticulous, behind-the-scenes arrangements for League functions, he was a cornerstone of day-to-day operations at the League, always willing to offer a helping hand, or a sympathetic ear. A compassionate, highly valued colleague and a dear friend, he is deeply missed.



A Veterinary Update:

Is It Contagious?

By Edward A. Leonard, D.V.M.

When a pet gets sick, the owner's concern over the animal's health is often compounded by fears about whether or not they or their children might catch the disease or infection.

Frequently, these fears are unfounded. Some of the most feared diseases, such as feline leukemia and canine distemper, cannot be transmitted to humans. There are many other diseases, however, that humans do share with animals, but pet owners can greatly lessen the chance of transmission by taking a few simple precautions.

Diseases which can be communicated from animals to people under natural circumstances are called zoonoses. One of the most serious of these diseases is rabies, which is transmitted from the saliva of an infected animal when it bites a human. Dogs and cats are required by law to be inoculated against rabies. Anyone who is bitten by an unvaccinated or unknown animal should thoroughly clean the wound with an antibacterial soap, seek medical attention immediately, and report the incident to the local public health authorities.

Other diseases can be contracted simply by handling an infected animal. One of these is ringworm, a fungal infection characterized by scaly lesions. Always wear protective gloves when handling an animal with ringworm, avoid direct skin contact, and practice good hygiene. Another highly contagious disease which can be contracted by handling an infected animal is sarcoptic mange, or canine scabies, symptoms of which include intense itching, reddening of the skin, and skin lesions. Fortunately, the parasitic mite that causes this disease lives for only a few days when removed from its canine host, so human infestations generally clear up quickly. People who develop skin problems in this situation, however, should consult their doctors.

Leptospirosis is a bacterial infection which can be transmitted from the urine of a sick animal. Another disease, toxoplasmosis, affects cats and birds and can be transmitted to humans through exposure to the feces of an infected cat. Safeguards against both of these diseases include scrupulous hand washing after any contact with animal waste, and wearing protective gloves when cleaning litter boxes or trays.

Cat scratch fever is a lymph node infection which can be treated with antibiotics. Though some researchers have recently claimed to identify the bacterium that causes this disease, the mechanism of transmission from cat to human is not clearly understood. Common-sense measures like washing your hands after playing with a cat, and exercising caution regarding contact with the eyes, or an open sore, are wise precautions, especially with people with compromised immune systems who are at greater risk of contracting disease.

Finally, there are diseases that are indirectly transmitted from animals to humans through intermediary agents, primarily insects. These include encephalitis, transmitted by mosquitoes, and Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever, both of which are transmitted by the bite of an infected tick. Keeping pets from roaming loose and regular grooming to inspect for ticks will help reduce risks.

A Rabbit Advisory!

A recent article on the care of rabbits in the Fall, 1993 issue of *Our Fourfooted Friends* recommended the use of sawdust for bedding and litter boxes. We are grateful to League member Ronald Mura of Wellesley for alerting us to potential dangers in the use of softwood shavings and dust that have recently come to light.

"A strong correlation has been observed between the aromatic emissions (called phenols) from softwoods like pine and cedar, and liver damage in small mammals," he writes. "To my knowledge, the cause-and-effect has not been scientifically established, but it would be prudent to avoid the use of sawdust and shavings from softwoods in animal cages." Safe alternatives include hardwood shavings (without odor), organic-paper pelleted bedding, and various litters on the market made from plant material. Most commercial cat litter contains dust that damages a rabbit's respiratory system, Mr. Mura points out.

Outdoor cats risk rabies through encounters with wildlife.

Responding to the Rabies Threat

Since the first case of a rabid raccoon was identified in Massachusetts in September, 1992, the disease has turned up in 192 communities, according to the state Department of Public Health. By the end of 1993, 715 rabid animals had been identified, including 603 raccoons, as well as skunks, woodchucks, foxes and cattle. Five of the rabid raccoons were apprehended by League agents on the streets of Boston.

Most significant to pet owners is the fact that this total also included 13 cats which had contracted the raccoon rabies strain, presumably through contact with wildlife. Though the League has not yet identified any domestic pets in Boston with rabies, the number of animals that had to be quarantined this year under League supervision increased by almost 70% over the previous year.

"This is an indication that people are taking this threat seriously, as well they should," according to law enforcement coordinator Alan B. Borgal. "People have to understand that if their pet is not vaccinated, and is bitten or wounded by an unknown or unvaccinated animal, the first recommendation of the state is that the animal be euthanized. The only alternative to this is confinement of the animal under strictly supervised quarantine conditions for six months."

Meeting the quarantine conditions can be both emotionally and financially costly. State guidelines require that the first three months of quarantine be away from the owner's home, under a veterinarian's supervision. If the animal shows no symptoms, it can be returned to its home for the last three months, but still must remain in strict isolation.

A North Walpole family whose dog dragged a dead rabid raccoon across its yard succeeded in persuading state authorities to allow them to quarantine the dog at home, but only after incurring considerable legal expenses, and building what amounted to an "apartment" for the dog in their home, a 19 by 8 foot carpeted, isolation cage. This dog's rabies vaccination was three weeks overdue, and it had not been bitten by the raccoon, factors that were taken into consideration in allowing the home quarantine. This alternative would never have been considered for an unvaccinated pet that was bitten by a rabid animal.

Rabies Clinics

For pet owners in the Boston area, the League will provide low-cost rabies inoculations for dogs and cats at a series of monthly clinics to be held in various neighborhoods. Rabies vaccinations will cost $2.00, with no charge to pet owners 60 years and over.

Upcoming clinics will be held on the following dates, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.:

Saturday, April 30, at the League's Pine Ridge Branch, 238 Pine Street in Dedham, near the West Roxbury and Hyde Park line;

Saturday, May 21, at League headquarters in Boston's South End, 10 Chandler Street (corner of Arlington & Tremont Streets); and

Saturday, June 11, at Boston Fire Company 52, Ladder #29, 975 Blue Hill Avenue, in Dorchester.

NEWSFRONT

ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Alexandra Boyle, 9, of Weston cuddles one of the League's homeless residents as she presents her birthday gifts to League president Arthur G. Slade. For her ninth birthday, instead of presents, Alexandra asked her friends and family for donations to the Animal Rescue League and collected a very generous $127. "I hope this money will help the animals," she said. The League salutes Alexandra's spirit of sharing, and wishes her many happy birthdays in the years to come.

LEAGUE APPOINTS NEW CONTROLLER

Todd M. Hutchinson, former controller and systems administrator of the Park Street Church in Boston, joined the League staff as controller in November, 1993. A Certified Public Accountant with B.S. and M.S. degrees in accounting from the University of North Texas, he also served as senior accountant with C.P. Lambert and Associates, and was a staff auditor with Ernst & Whitney and Price Waterhouse.

A SAFER ANTIFREEZE ALTERNATIVE

Each year, thousands of pets die from accidental poisoning by antifreeze. Now a company in Nebraska has introduced a new type of antifreeze which they describe as "essentially non-toxic, and safer for pets, children and wildlife." Unlike conventional antifreeze which is made with a toxic ingredient called ethylene glycol, the new product is made with essentially non-toxic propylene glycol, a chemical which is classified as "generally recognized as safe" by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and is used in many consumer products including cosmetics, medicines, snack food, and pet food. More information on this product is available from Safe Brands Corporation, P.O. Box 3007, Omaha, NE 68103 (Tel. 1-800-289-7234).

WSPA GIVES EMERGENCY AID TO FORMER SOVIET ZOOS

Zoo animals in two former Soviet republics are no longer starving and freezing to death, thanks to disaster relief provided by the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA). The organization provided food, fuel for heat, and veterinary pharmaceuticals to the Yeravan Zoo in Armenia and the Tbilisi Zoo in Georgia. More than half of the animals at both zoos had died of cold or starvation during the past two winters of economic deprivation.

HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Linda Lewis (center) of the Flatley Company presents a check in the amount of $579 to Frank Carmichael, acting manager of the League's Pine Ridge Branch in Dedham, as Dedham staff members Michelle Testa, Mike Thomas and Lisa Syngay look on. The gift represented the proceeds of a "Pet Photo with Santa Claus" benefit conducted by the Flatley Company at its Dedham Mall during the holiday season.

HATS OFF TO A WINNING DESIGN!

Congratulations to Michelle Testa, of the League's Pine Ridge branch in Dedham, whose design was selected as the winner in the recent contest to create a new logo for League staff hats. Her design will be reproduced in blue and red on a white reflective patch. Hats should be available this summer, and watch for her design on T-shirts and sweatshirts, too!

CAPE BRANCH SHELTERS RARE WINTER VISITOR

This dovekie, a species of auk which breeds in coastal Greenland, was brought to the League's Brewster shelter this winter by a concerned citizen who found it blown inland and into the path of a car during a December northeaster. The smallest of all winter seabirds, the distinctively marked dovekie did not appear to be injured, but did not fly away. An examination by a veterinarian uncovered no physical problems, so after a few days of rest at the shelter, the bird was returned to the waters of Cape Cod Bay.

FOND SEND-OFF!

There's a gap in the ranks now that law enforcement secretary Georgia Dimitri has retired. Here friends and colleagues bid farewell at a party held in Mrs. Dimitri's honor on the occasion of her retirement, December 3, after 17 years of service at the League.

BAY STATERS: FOND OF FERRETS BUT DOWN ON DOGS?

The Commonwealth recently passed legislation allowing the possession of ferrets as pets, but requiring that the animals be neutered or spayed, and inoculated against rabies and distemper. The law prohibits the sale of ferrets in pet shops, sets a breeder's license fee of no less than $1,000, and requires that all ferrets sold by breeders be permanently marked, or tattooed, for identification purposes.

Meanwhile, in a recent study by the American Veterinary Medical Association, Massachusetts ranked lowest in the country in terms of dog ownership. According to the AVMA, Oklahoma leads the nation in the percentage of households with dogs, with a dog residing in nearly one of every two Oklahoma homes. The District of Columbia shared the dubious distinction with Massachusetts of having the smallest percentage of households with dogs.

ANIMAL FRIENDS SUMMER SCHOOL NOW OFFERS FULL-DAY SESSIONS

Now entering its 45th season, the League's Animal Friends Summer School in Cataumet this year will offer, for the first time, two full-day sessions of animal-related classes and activities designed to foster appreciation of the animal world and nature. Youngsters living or vacationing on Cape Cod will have an opportunity to participate in such programs as ocean ecology, care of small pets, horse care, farm life, nature exploration, dog obedience and a variety of crafts and hobby activities. Session I, from June 27 to July 15, is open to youngsters who will be starting third grade in the fall and those older, up to the age of 13. Session II, from July 18 to August 12, is open to children entering grades 1, 2 or 3 in the fall.

Parents have the option of enrolling their children for either full-day (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) or half-day (mornings or afternoons) programs. For more information or to register, contact Edward J. Powers III, Director, Animal Friends Summer School, Animal Rescue League of Boston, P.O. Box 265, Boston, MA 02117 (617) 426-9170.

SESSION I:

June 27 to July 15, 1994
(Three-week session)
Registration Fee: $255 (full-day)
$170 (half-day)
(For each additional child in a family, $210 full-day, $150 half-day)

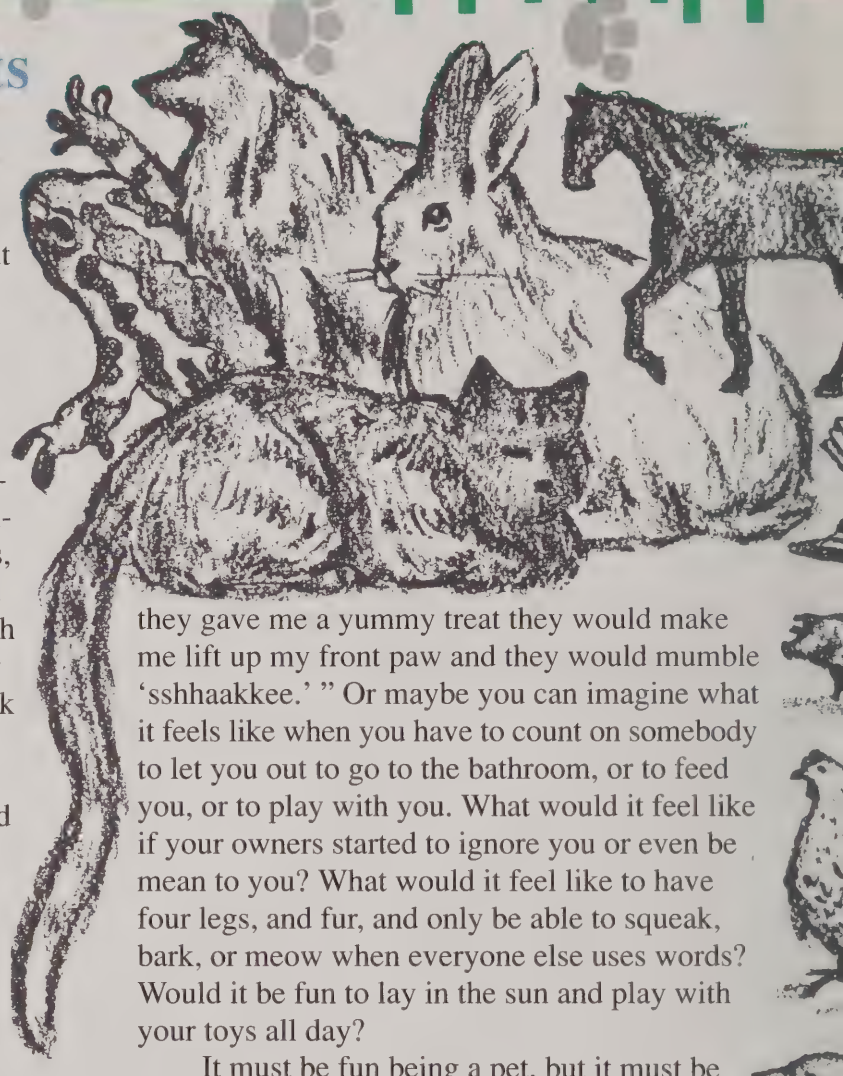
SESSION II:

July 18 to August 12, 1994
(Four-week session)
Registration Fee: $340 (full-day)
$225 (half-day)
(For each additional child in the family, $290 full-day, $200 half-day)

ANNUAL PET SHOW

Saturday, July 23, 1994
(Rain date: July 24)

How You Can Help Pets and Other Animals . . .



To start off, what is a pet? It may seem like a silly question and easy enough to answer, but it is true that different people would give different answers to this question. There are many types of animals that we humans keep as pets throughout the world, and they vary from culture to culture and even within one culture. In America we usually keep dogs, cats, rabbits, reptiles, and fish as pets, to name a few. In other cultures they keep different kinds of animals as pets, like cows, sheep, chickens, and goats. They hold their pet cows and chickens in high respect, much the same as we treat the family dog as a member of the family and with respect too. You may think this sounds a little funny, but to other people in other countries, and even in our own country, they think it is funny that we keep dogs, cats, and rabbits as pets and members of our families. In America we usually would never think of eating a dog or a cat as our meal, but in other cultures they would never think of eating their cows or chickens as their meal! It is a funny world we live in!

One of the best ways for us to understand and to help our pets, and for that matter each other, is by trying to imagine what it is like to be them. When we understand how our dogs and cats feel we can meet their needs and desires better and understand what they are trying to tell us. So the next time you have a couple of minutes, sit next to your pet (or if you don't have a pet maybe you can just imagine or look at a friend's pet) and think about him/her for a while.

Possibly, you can imagine what it felt like when they were just born and did not know the rules of the house or recognize anybody around them. The world must have seemed pretty confusing to them! Maybe this is what they thought, "There were all of these giants passing me back and forth between each other and then every time I went to the bathroom they plopped me onto a piece of black-and-white paper. And each time they gave me a yummy treat they would make me lift up my front paw and they would mumble 'sshhaakkee.' " Or maybe you can imagine what it feels like when you have to count on somebody to let you out to go to the bathroom, or to feed you, or to play with you. What would it feel like if your owners started to ignore you or even be mean to you? What would it feel like to have four legs, and fur, and only be able to squeak, bark, or meow when everyone else uses words? Would it be fun to lay in the sun and play with your toys all day?

It must be fun being a pet, but it must be hard sometimes too! So, since we can better imagine what it is like to be a pet, what are some of the things we can do to make our pets' lives healthy and happy?

One of the best things we can do is to make a commitment to our pets to be best friends for their entire lives, and not to forget our commitment. What does it mean to make a commitment, though? Well, it is kind of like being a best friend, or a brother or a sister. When we have brothers and sisters or best friends we usually make a promise inside of us to be with, enjoy, and to help that person. Even though sometimes we may disagree, or have a fight, we always remember that promise we made to them inside of ourselves. So we can look beyond our problems, even though we may still have some, and still love, help, and enjoy each other. It is the

same with our pets; even though we may have some troubles with them and sometimes we may be busy, we cannot forget our commitment we made to them when we decided to have them as our pets. Then both of us can enjoy each other and love each other! Remember, our pets depend on us, much like we depend on our families.

Now that we understand our pets and our relationship to them a little better, what can we actually do with and for them? One of the best things we can do for them is to spay and neuter our pets. This is a simple and painless operation so that our pets will not have more babies. Also our pets will live longer and have less chances of becoming sick if they have this operation. The reason this is nice to do to our pets is because right now there simply are already too many animals in shelters and on the streets that don't have homes. And if we let our pets have babies the chances are that it will be hard to find homes for them. And if you think about it, if there are already baby pets alive in shelters and on the streets that need homes, it would be a lot nicer if we gave them homes first before we let our pets have more babies.

There are many animals in shelters all around the United States that need homes, animals like puppies, kittens, dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, hamsters, guinea pigs, and even rats! So if a friend is looking to get a pet, tell them to go to a shelter and save an animal instead of buying one at a pet store. Pet stores keep making (or breeding) animals, even when they know that there are already animals alive that cannot find homes as it is. This just adds to the problems that pets in our world have.

Another thing that you can do is to spend a lot of time exercising and playing with your pets. The animals we keep as pets did not always live with humans. Thousands of years ago and even today animals like dogs, cats, and birds lived and still live in the wild with each other. They did not live with humans. In the wild animals have families and homes (called "habitats") where they live. They play together, eat together, and sleep together. Since thousands of years ago and today humans have decided to keep animals as pets, it is up to us to make sure that they have time to do all of these things that they naturally want to and would do with their families. Dogs, cats, rabbits, and hamsters and all of our other pets still have all of these needs that they had back then when they lived in groups outside. So, it is up to us to make sure that they have time each day to play, exercise, love, and enjoy life. Not to mention that it is fun for us to play with our pets too!

There are other animals in our world besides our pets that we can help too. Some of these other animals we usually do not keep as pets in American culture (we usually use them in different ways), but people of other cultures (and sometimes in America) do. Remember to think about what a pet is; a pet is another animal that we have chosen to become part of our family. We make a commitment and come to love them as a best friend or a brother or sister. Imagine, we do this even with animals as small as gerbils, birds, and even fish!

So what are some other animals that humans use in our daily lives? We use animals for many things such as clothing like leather (which comes from cows' skin), food (hamburger is cow meat), fun (circuses, rodeos, and zoos use animals), education and research (sometimes they use dogs, cats, and rabbits in experiments), and product testing (many companies test things like soap, shampoo, and shaving cream in the eyes of rabbits and other animals). Many times the animals used in these areas are not treated nicely (humanely). Oftentimes the animals used in these areas are the same animals we keep as pets that we come to know and to love. And if someone ever did some of these things to our pets, we would be very upset at the person who did them. So you can help by learning more about the different ways that people use animals and by trying to think about the different ways we use animals each day in our lives. Good luck, be happy, and love your animals!

PETS IN THE PICTURE

1 "Angel" and "Daisy" keep a faithful vigil at the home of their owners David and Carolyn Graupner of East Harwich, who adopted their "odd pair" pets from the League's Brewster shelter.

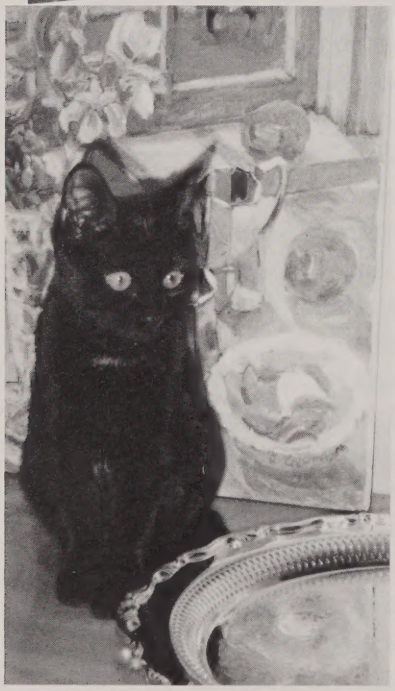
2 Here's "Safford Slade," affectionately known as "Mr. Mush," soaking up the sun in one of his favorite spring locations at the Groton home of League president Arthur Slade and his wife, Susan. Safford is an 8-year-old alumnus of the Dedham shelter.

3 " 'Hershey' is a healthy, happy and playful kitten . . . and very much a 'people' cat," according to Mark and Dana DeAngelis of Wellesley, who adopted their new pet from the Dedham shelter in November. "We're happy to be able to give her a good home, and we think she's pretty happy to be here," they write.

4 Mr. and Mrs. Jon Hirschtick of Winchester describe their dog "Annie" as a "big bundle of love." "She's just wonderful," they write. "We also hope that somewhere in the Greenfield area her past owners will see this, and know that we are so grateful to them and to the ARL for bringing Annie and us together."

5 " 'Zap' (Geronimo 'Zap' Zapata at right) is full of personality and lives up to his name since he never walks — he zaps about," according to Ellin Reisner of Boston who adopted the orange kitten from the League in September. "He is thriving and growing bigger and stronger daily. He has adopted very well to his new family which includes his pal (left) 'Max Weber,' who was adopted from the League, with his sister, 'Emma Goldman,' seven years ago."

6 What a difference a year or two makes, especially in the life of "Scruffy," shown here relaxing with a pal at her warm, comfortable home. Two years ago, Scruffy was found abandoned in Dorchester with her eight puppies. "She is wonderful, happy, smart, and alive! Thank you," writes Geraldine McQuoid of Rochdale, who adopted Scruffy after reading of her plight in the *Boston Herald.*



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Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner
Editor

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Love comes in all colors and sizes...

...at the Animal Rescue League of Boston.

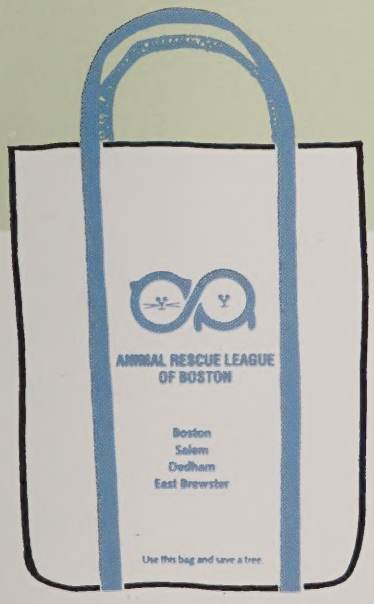
Give the gift of love to someone special this year...a present that won't be too big or too small, too dull or too daring, and will never have to be exchanged after the holidays. With a pet adoption gift certificate from the Animal Rescue League of Boston, they can pick out the pet of their choice—a gift that will bring enjoyment for many years to come—at any of the League's four conveniently-located adoption shelters.

A gift certificate for a puppy or kitten, older dog or cat, hamster, gerbil, or even a rabbit can be ordered by telephone, and charged to your credit card.

Animal Rescue League of Boston 10 Chandler St. • (617) 426-9170

Branches: **Dedham** (617) 326-0729 **Salem** (508) 744-7910 **E. Brewster** (508) 255-1030

A non-profit humane society helping animals since 1899.



SAVE A TREE

NEW ARL TOTE BAG

Be a conscientious consumer and carry your purchases in this rugged white cotton duck tote bag, roomy (17″ × 11½″) with royal blue handles and League logo. Priced at $12, plus $3 for shipping and handling. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

ORDER FORM:

Please send me _____ shopping totes at $12 each, plus $3 shipping and handling.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of $ _____ made payable to the Animal Rescue League of Boston.

Mail to:
Animal Rescue League of Boston
P.O. Box 265
Boston, MA 02117

Spring Fling — Photo by Andrea Bennett of White Horse Beach.

The President
and Board of Directors
Cordially invite you
to attend our

Annual Meeting

Thursday, April 28, 1994
at 2:30 p.m.
League Headquarters
Corner of
Arlington & Tremont Streets
Boston, Massachusetts

Program:

Annual Meeting
Election of Directors

Guest Speaker:

Alan W. Cunningham
Animal Behaviorist/Livestock Specialist
Animal Rescue League of Boston

Our Fourfooted Friends (US ISSN 0030-6851)
Animal Rescue League of Boston
P.O. Box 265, Boston, Massachusetts 02117

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